



**CALIFORNIA
HIGH-SPEED RAIL
AUTHORITY**

BRIEFING: MARCH 2012 BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM #14

TO: Chairman Richard and Board Members

FROM: Gregg Albright, Acting Planning Director

DATE: May 2-3, 2012

RE: Visual Guidelines for the CHSR Program

Background

The Authority team has been engaged in the development of visual guidelines and aesthetic treatments for the California high speed rail program. Technical Memorandum (TM) 200.06, on the Aesthetic Guidelines for Non-Station Structures, was approved in December, 2011 and is a reference document of the Request for Proposal for Design Build Services (RFP No. HSR 11-16). TM 200.07, addressing the Aesthetic Review Process, and TM 200.10, outlining Bridge and Overpass Aesthetics, are currently being reviewed.

Meetings with the City of Fresno to identify and address specific aesthetic design treatments were initiated in early 2012. Those meetings have focused on the City's concerns related to: 1.) the design of major structures, 2.) suggestions for wall and barrier treatments, and 3.) recommendations for landscaping and exterior treatments. Due to the accelerated ARRA funding schedule required for the release of RFP No. 11-16, instructions related to the City's specific aesthetic concerns will be handled through an addendum process.

Modified Process to Address Visual Guidelines

The first RFP addendum, currently being reviewed by FRA, contains language on the first aesthetic design treatment grouping noted above: major structures. Specifically the San Joaquin River Bridge/UP structural spans, and overpasses at South Cedar Avenue, Golden State Boulevard and SR- 99 spans are identified.

As part of the RFP Technical Proposal evaluation process, the Design Build proposers will submit two aesthetic and structural design solutions for the structures noted above. An independent Aesthetic Design Review Panel (ADRP) of design experts will review these aesthetic and structural design solutions. A City representative will be involved in this review process and will also be present at specific meetings with the proposers on this topic.

Recommendations for the other aesthetic design treatment areas are currently being worked out with the City's staff to ensure direction is provided to proposers on the wall/barrier treatments and landscaping/exterior treatments. Subsequent addendums to the RFP will be used to address these aesthetic issues.

City of Fresno Request for Design Assistance

On April 13, 2012 the City of Fresno sent a letter to Chairman Richard requesting the Authority's support for the services of an independent, professional design consultant who could assist the City in the review and comment process related to non-station high speed rail infrastructure for Fresno. This request is similar to the one made by the City of San Jose in 2010. As a result of that earlier request, the PMT worked with the City of San Jose to produce a Visual Design Guidelines document (January 2012).

The City of Fresno's request for assistance is appropriate given the RFP schedule demands and the level of effort required. The Authority team is currently negotiating the amount of this assistance and the City has agreed to set a limit on the amount of funding specifically allocated for a design consultant's assistance. The City has also agreed to advance the work to maintain the RFP schedule.

Future Applications of Aesthetic Visual Design Applications

As noted earlier, the schedule requirements of the ARRA funding necessitated an accelerated visual guideline process for the first construction segment. Staff very much appreciates the City of Fresno's cooperation in the advancement of this schedule and their work to facilitate the addendum process in a timely manner. However, in the future as visual and aesthetic guidelines are applied to other areas of the project, it is anticipated that a consistent and uniform process to address local jurisdiction's contextual aesthetic design issues will be used and will have been informed by the process developed with the City of Fresno.

Future presentations to the Board on the recommended process for addressing visual guidelines and local jurisdiction concerns will be scheduled. Policy development for related topics such as CHSR structure and landscape maintenance will also be brought forth for Board consideration.

Attachments:

- Technical Memorandum 200.06
<http://cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=12073>
- California High-Speed Train Infrastructure Visual Design Guidelines: San Jose
<http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/assets/0/152/256/266/27637ac4-e60c-48f7-909a-3c2456db68a8.pdf>